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ABSTRACT

This paper examines student teachers' resistance to multicultural education, contrasting the expectations of teacher educators, as expressed in the literature, with the perspectives of preservice teachers from a required multiculturalism course. The study involved participant observation, with the researcher participating in the course as a student, completing all assignments and readings, and participating in class discussions and group projects. Students' written cultural autobiographies were collected, and stimulated recall interviews were conducted with students. One class meeting was videotaped to examine students' interactions that displayed acceptance to resistance. Small focus group interviews examined the level of agreement among students. Student essays were analyzed regarding cultural diversity. Students varied in why they believed they were required to take the course. Teacher educators and student teachers were at cross-purposes regarding the goals and anticipated outcomes of multicultural courses. Topics that met the most student resistance were those that challenged their unexamined beliefs in individualism over group membership as the most salient features of teaching. Seven suggestions for overcoming resistance within the context of a required multicultural teacher education course are presented (e.g., clarify and justify purposes; give examples; and maximize placements in local urban schools). (Contains 31 references.) (SM)

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An Ethnographic Study of Preservice Teacher Resistance to Multiculturalism: Implications for Teaching

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Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New Orleans, LA, Thursday, April 27, 2000.

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Statement of the Problem

Many students enrolled in teacher education courses resist discussions of cultural diversity. This is a problem for several reasons. The growing demographic mismatch between the increasing population of students of color and the increasing teacher population of European American middle class females is the most common reason given. Moreover, there are convincing arguments that it is the obligation of the teaching profession to educate *all* students because it is in the economic interests of the country and, most importantly, students have a civil and human right to be educated. Although teacher education alone cannot change any of the structural issues that lead to differential educational attainment, a teacher education curriculum that affirms diversity can give potential teachers experience in questioning the structures, policies and teaching strategies that most hinder students of color.

However, this cannot be forced upon unwilling learners. Current conceptions of resistance, as discussed in the teacher education literature, can be linked to a subsection of literature that problematizes efforts to promote multicultural curricula in teacher education programs. Understanding the sociocultural bases for resistance will ultimately lead to multicultural teacher education that can overcome or move beyond preservice teacher resistance. This article focuses on these implications for teaching. I will contrast the expectations of teacher educators, as expressed in the research literature, with the perspectives of preservice teachers from one actual course on multiculturalism that I studied. Implications for decreasing preservice resistance center on the intersection of these somewhat mismatched purposes.

Background of the Problem

The idea of preservice teacher resistance to cultural diversity was brought to my attention as the discussion instructor of a required social foundations course. A few events each semester I taught in the 1997-98 academic year stumped me as the teacher and led me towards this topic. For

example, in the Spring semester, a group of four students--one European American female, one European American male, one student of East Indian descent and one Chinese American female had the responsibility to lead the class discussion based on the assigned chapter on the history of African American education. They decided to have their classmates argue the debate between DuBois and Washington using SES (class) instead of race. At some point the small group said they thought their peers could relate better to the issue of class rather than a discussion of African Americans and race. I made sure I asked them if DuBois would agree that class could be substituted for race, but the rest of the class went along with it. Does *skirting* the issue of race altogether, even when it is explicitly assigned constitute student resistance? What should a teacher educator do in this situation? This and related questions frame this research.

During my initial conversation with an instructor of a similar course at another large state university, she told me she thinks her students interpret her focus on race as a "Black thing" of concern because she is a Black educator. Moreover, she has found that after her White male friend who works in an inner city school in New York City presents his experiences as a teacher, her students suddenly become proponents of the same positions they previously resisted when it came from her alone. Her class, too, is required for entry into the teacher education program. Her awareness of student resistance has led her to only discuss race in the last few weeks of the semester after she has approached the problems in schooling from the "backdoor", as she calls it, of class, gender, and power relationships.

Preservice teachers in both courses, European American students and students of color, resisted discussions of current discrimination, race, ethnicity, and bilingualism in teacher education courses. The level of frustration and the ingenious ways students resist the content should be taken seriously. Discussions of race, for example, are often taboo, as Tatum (1992; 1994) states. An

exploration of the basis for resistance versus acceptance can lead towards understanding and pedagogical solutions.

Methodology

There is a trend towards affirming diversity within teacher education in the hope that it will lead to better teachers of all students. However, even if multicultural teacher education curricula became common place, which remains an elusive goal at this point in time, students may still resist such content. Methodologically the empirical research focuses on the emic perspectives of course instructors-researchers, or their etic analyses of preservice teacher resistance. Analysis of preservice teachers' journals, interviews with resistant students, and instructors' perceptions dominate the methods sections in the literature. The preservice students themselves have not been asked why they resist. Moreover, most of the authors cited conclude that there is plenty of room for improvement in the efforts to overcome student resistance and prepare successful teachers of diverse students. The focus of most articles, however, is on the small success stories. The authors (who are often the instructors of the course under investigation) focus on the few students who showed growth during the course. Research that builds on that of Ahlquist (1991), Clark (1987) and Higgenbotham (1996), who all focus on resistance and implications for overcoming said resistance, is clearly called for to complement the work highlighting the small success stories of accepting students.

All of the above is examined using qualitative methods. As Peshkin (1993) states "the goodness of qualitative research" is in its description of processes, relationships, settings and situations, systems and people (p. 24). Resistance is clearly framed by the relationships between students and instructors within classroom settings. The emic perspectives of students were uncovered using qualitative methods that involved them in meaning-making activities related to their

reactions to the course I studied. Qualitative methods are a natural fit with my goals of both understanding of the context of this course, as well as students reactions to the course.

Resistance: Operational Definition

The following preservice teacher actions and interactions are considered resistance: a) avoiding discussion of any aspect of multiculturalism; b) dismissing the content as based on biased/unbalanced information; c) dismissing the content as too baffling to discuss further; d) dismissing the content as irrelevant; e) exhibiting discomfort; f) being silent; g) absence from class, or h) hostile verbal challenges. Moreover, students who merely argue against a position presented by the instructor or a text are not considered resistant because disagreement on a theoretical or practical level remains within common classroom norms for discussion. Resistance is defined this way for two reasons. First, this topic began for me, as for many of the authors cited in the literature, as a teaching problem. Students who merely disagree with the content or an opinion can be engaged in further discussion. Resistant students, as I am defining them, are quite difficult to engage in further discussion because they oppose the very objectives of the course content. Secondly, multicultural teacher education is typically based on the assumption that discrimination continues to exist. Students who challenge this assumption are resisting the entire basis for such a course.

Location of the Project

This project was conducted at a large state research university. I focused on the one multicultural course required for the majority of students preparing to teach. One professor graciously agreed to participate and allowed me access to her students enrolled in one of the three sections of this course. It is part of the "Common Professional Education Core" requirements described in the Program Bulletin for most programs of teacher certification and masters degrees in teaching. Typically three sections of this course are taught each fall and spring academic semester.

Students enrolled in different teacher education programs are mixed throughout the sections, however, the vast majority of the students in my section were seeking elementary certification. Two different departments share the responsibility for providing instructors for this course. It stands out as the one course with explicit attention to cultural diversity, although the content also includes kinds of individual diversity, such as students with learning disabilities.

Data Collection Methods

The initial method of data collection was participant observation, with an emphasis on active participation over passive observation. I participated in the course as a student by completing all course assignments and readings, and participating in class discussions and group projects. Second, I collected written cultural autobiographies students wrote, which identified their cultural/ideological backgrounds. Third, I focused data collection somewhat towards explanations by conducting stimulated recall interviews with students who participated in class or were placed in my small discussion groups. I began with the most accepting students and talked to students along the range from accepting to apathetic to resistant students from late September to mid-December. Fourth, I arranged for another individual to videotape one three hour long class meeting in order to preserve an audiovisual record of students' interactions that display acceptance to resistance. The resulting videotaped scenes served as an opening catalyst for focus group interviews. Fifth, in order to determine the level of agreement among students, I conducted focus group interviews with small groups of preservice teachers enrolled in the class. Finally, I analyzed student essays related to cultural diversity, after the professor turned in grades. I have focused analysis for this paper on the mismatch between the research literature and the preservice teachers' sociocultural knowledge in the quest for pedagogical implications.

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The Literature

The need for multicultural teacher education is well-established and accepted in the literature (Cochran-Smith, 1995; Gomez, 1996, Liston & Zeichner, 1990; Zeichner & Melnick, 1996). The most commonly cited justification for multicultural teacher education is the changing demographics of increasing numbers of students of color and decreasing numbers of teachers of color (or conversely the increasing numbers of European American female teachers). Sometimes this is the only reason given or it is paired with an assumption about the problems associated with a cultural mismatch (e.g., Fallahi, 1994; Finch & Rasch, 1992; Garcia & Pugh, 1992; Gomez, 1996; Greenman & Kimmell, 1995; Hood & Parker, 1994).

Others are more thorough and persuasive, such as Trent (1990), who gives five reasons for teacher education to be more inclusive in terms of race and ethnicity. 1) The demographic change in the student population and American society towards more people of color; 2) The economic problems associated with undereducating a third of the population; 3) The demographic change in the teaching force towards more European American middle class women and fewer teachers of color; 4) Teachers who and a system that cannot teach a third of the population should be considered incompetent; 5) Most important to Trent, education is a human and civil right for students of color. The demographic reason is too simplistic unless it is paired with other reasons, such as Trent's last two about the ethical duties of the teaching profession towards all students, as well as the established weakness of most teachers in teaching students of color. For example, Olsen (1997) details the ways a diverse urban high school continues to reproduce inequality by Americanizing the immigrant students, despite its public rhetoric of reformation towards affirming diversity. The Americanization process continues via 1) excluding and separating immigrant students academically, 2) putting pressure on immigrant students to give up their identities and

languages, and 3) the placement of immigrant students within the racial hierarchy of American society and within that particular high school context. Teacher education that affirms diversity should give preservice teachers the tools to critique and work against such school policies.

Preservice Teachers

In contrast to the literature, the preservice teachers enrolled in the course I studied thought that goal of their course was 1) to understand that individuals are unique, 2) to become aware of "up and coming" issues in schools, and 3) to promote tolerance of differences, especially individual differences. However, the literature and social foundations courses I am familiar with focus more on 1) promoting respect, 2) understanding different perspectives, and 3) critiquing schooling practices that harm students of color. These preservice teachers are constrained by the structure of the course they were enrolled in, which had an interpersonal focus. In fact, they also frequently expressed that they were not clear on the goal of the course. This is especially problematic for the preservice teachers who already considered themselves open-minded; they were less likely to see the relevance of the content. One dismissed the content as too "wishy washy" to be taken seriously:

> I think the class is just sort of wishy-washy. I have friends that are so different. My highschool was very mixed. I am already open-minded.... I think I turned out good enough. I don't need this to help me see the light. I think some people do, so it is good.... By wishy- washy, I guess I just mean that every week we come in and talk about how people are different, language, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, etc. [and] although the topic information is interesting, it just seems like we have the same conversation every week addressing another difference.

There was a range in students' ideas about why they were required to take this course. On the other end of the spectrum are a few preservice teachers who sound much like the teacher educators in the research literature described above. The majority of the students, however, responded to my question about why the course is required with comments like:

> I think the class is very insightful.... It is really telling me about all the up and coming things. Because like I said, I grew up in a town that was pretty much one way and we didn't observe Jewish holidays, we never did anything like that and here it is really different. Now I know how to make everyone feel comfortable in my class because I am sure there will be students of all different cultures/races, languages.... I think because they would want us to be open-minded to all students, to read about different situations so that we could keep in mind that these things could definitely be up and coming in our classroom. I just think the exposure is good and I think that is what they wanted us to have. I am hoping we will talk about how to implement certain things in the classroom.

If the purpose of multicultural teacher education is to illustrate that all K-12 students are unique the implication is that teachers should accept and encourage students to share their background with their classmates, for example during show and tell or circle time stories. Similarly, teachers should just be aware of these up and coming issues. Tolerance implies that teachers should not overtly discriminate or be biased against their students, as well as making it clear that student-student intolerance is not accepted either. However, this is a more matter-of-fact goal than respect, understanding, especially understanding both sides of controversial issues and very far from taking a stand as a teacher against discriminatory school practices. Finally, the student quoted above hints at what became the most salient concern of preservice teachers enrolled in the course: classroom implementation. This will be discussed at length in the next section. Suggestions for overcoming the seeming mismatch between the purposes in the research literature and preservice teachers' assumptions about the purposes of multicultural teacher education will be discussed in the concluding section.

The Literature

How will teacher education reform affect the school teachers in K-12 schools? The literature ranges from authors who claim that what preservice teachers learn will have direct results when they begin teaching to others who acknowledge that it is a leap of faith. If there is any kind of consensus in the literature it is that perhaps teacher education can form the habit of questioning school practices, especially those that harm students of color (e.g., Cochran-Smith, 1995; King, 1991; Ladson-Billings, 1991; Zeichner, 1996). However, most authors have more specific agendas in their teacher education courses/programs and related research projects.

Cochran-Smith (1995) gives cases of her student teachers "constructing and confronting the dilemmas" (p. 500) involved in teaching diverse students. She wants to prepare teachers who can teach "against the grain" (p. 521); they should know the best practices, as well as the critiques of these practices. Similarly, a common set of teaching dispositions mark successful teachers of all students, including students of color. Common dispositions shared by successful teachers of diverse students include: high expectations, scaffolding (e.g., respecting home cultures while using them to teach the school culture), culturally specific information, teaching strategies (e.g., reciprocal interaction and mixed ability grouping), use of better assessments (e.g., portfolios), and involving parents more (Zeichner, 1996). Davidson (1996) studied two urban high schools and concludes that what matters most to students in creating academic failure, especially minority student failure, are structural and human interactions that separate, silence and label students.

Ladson-Billings' (1995) concept of culturally relevant teachers complements Zeichner's work. These teachers know or learn specific, cultural information about their students. Others share this emphasis on curriculum and teaching that links students to their home cultures (Coleman,

1985; Haberman, 1996; Nieto, 1996). Comer (1988) discusses his intervention work which focused on interpersonal relations and parental support for schooling.

Preservice Teachers

I discussed the implications preservice teachers took from the assumed goals of their multicultural course in the previous section. In proposing my project, I originally predicted that the ideological barriers to the course content would serve to be the greatest challenge for teaching because they had been in my teaching experience and in the research literature I focused on. Because most students were already aware of these issues, although many had not confronted them in such depth, they did not resist the stated learning objectives of their particular course. The professor hoped that her preservice teachers would become comfortable discussing issues of diversity, especially in terms of how these issues become salient for students who are "different" in some way. This is in contrast to the literature consensus: forming the habit of questioning the school practices that most hinder students of color (e.g., Cochran-Smith, 1995; Ladson-Billings, 1991, 1995; Zeichner, 1996).

The context of this particular course did not encourage them to confront their own ideological background as strongly as a course focusing on institutional racism and minority student failure might. Within the topics covered: language, gender, race, and sexuality, preservice teachers were asked to think in terms of their future interpersonal relations with "different" students they might have. While this is a laudable goal, it was easy for the students to conclude that they just needed to be "nice" to all students. Therefore, if they already considered themselves open-minded, as exemplified in the first quote in the previous section, they felt there was not much else they could gain from the course. Some reacted with boredom or apathy; others dismissed the course's relevance on this basis. Moreover, their ideological backgrounds may be more progressive than the literature expects, but they were also not pushed beyond their comfort zones and beyond rather

"politically correct" discussions of how to be an open-minded teacher of a few "diverse" students. This will be addressed further in my suggestions for teaching concluding section.

However, several topics did encourage them to confront their own ideological position more thoroughly—which, in turn, led to the most visible resistance to the ideas presented by other students and authors of selected readings. The most volatile class meeting occurred in week ten out of thirteen class meetings, just before Thanksgiving recess in the fall semester. The topic of white privilege in current society was addressed. The assertion by one student of color that white privilege exists led to what is termed "white defensiveness" (e.g., Chalmers, 1997; Delpit, 1998; King, 1991) and visible resistance by at least one student who turned bright red and refused to contribute to the class discussion.

The mismatch between the teacher educators, as represented by the research literature reviewed and preservice teachers can be seen in preservice teachers' resistance to class discussions that seem obvious or are offensive to their unexamined ideological positions. This can be negotiated through a pedagogy that meets the needs of both. But first, I will continue by first discussing explanations for resistance, those given in the research literature and those given by my preservice participants themselves.

Towards Explanations for Resistance

The Literature

Several authors do give explanations for resistance versus acceptance. Finch and Rasch (1992) locate preservice teacher resistance in the following forms: 1) discomfort with students unlike themselves, 2) existence of racism, 3) lack of belief that all children can learn, 4) absence of desire to work in diverse schools, and 5) ignorance of the civil rights movement and related historical information. Somewhat similarly, Tatum (1992) outlines student resistance to discussions of race as based on the following: 1) Race is a taboo subject for discussion, especially in diverse situations,

2) the assumption that the U.S. is a just society (she also calls it the "myth of meritocracy"), and 3) if one is not prejudiced than one is not affected by racism (this is especially among White students). Daniel and Benton (1995) find the same three bases for resistance in preservice teachers. Moreover, White students' resistance is related to the lack of White allies, or models of a positive, nonracist White identity for them to strive for (Tatum, 1994). This is in contrast to the usual three models of Whiteness available: 1) a White supremacist, 2) a color blind person, or 3) someone who suffers from "White guilt". The White ally is a needed model for students moving into the final stages. Tatum struggles to find such models because they are either lacking and/or not readily available.

In terms of classroom actions, Higgenbotham (1996) discusses generic college student resistance via being *vocal*, *silent* or *absent* during discussions of race, class and gender. In addition, two discussions of resistance in social foundations courses are especially applicable. Storz and Sabik (1998) teach inservice teachers who resist the student-centered nature of their foundations courses, as well as the negative content--that is a focus on the symptoms of racism and gender bias, but not on solutions. Their resistance was in the form of vocal feedback. Ahlquist (1991) speaks perfectly to what I experienced in teaching an undergraduate social foundations course. Her students are mostly European American, middle class females, as are most of the students' examined in all the articles surveyed. She found her students to be initially curious and very uninformed about multicultural education, but her presentation of material that challenged their previous world views was met with resistance in the forms of *denial* that racism and sexism still exist, *outright verbal challenges*, and *mystification* of the point of the course. What most upset them was a discussion of what teachers can do to stop racism and sexism. Her students insisted that teachers are and should be neutral.

Fine, Weis, Powell and Wong (1997) edited a collection that examines both Whiteness as a racial category as well as the related privileges of being White, instead of just focusing on oppressed

peoples. Moreover, King defines what she calls "dysconscious" racism:

> Many of my students also believe that affirming diversity is tantamount to racial separatism, that diversity threatens national unity, or that social inequity originates with sociocultural deficits and not with unequal outcomes that are inherent in our socially stratified society. [R]egardless of their conscious intentions, certain culturally sanctioned beliefs my students hold about inequity and why it persists, especially for African Americans, take White norms and privilege as givens (p. 133).

The literature gives confirming events of student resistance, as well as examples of background factors that begin to explain resistance. Preservice teachers explain their resistance in a similar fashion, however, they focus much more on the lack of emphasis on teaching models than on how their unexamined beliefs may be challenged. It is possible they are not aware of their tacit assumptions, however, I was able to uncover some additional bases for their resistance that can lead towards pedagogical solutions in the teacher education classroom.

Preservice Teachers

The topics that met the most student resistance were those that most challenged their unexamined beliefs in individualism over group membership as the most salient feature of teaching. Related to this commitment to individualism is the belief in meritocracy. Finally, the taboo against talking about race and power seems to be strong, as Tatum (1992; 1994) explains best. A few class meetings and writing assignments opened up the opportunity for ideological growth—some students gained a more complex understanding of themselves or their perspectives on teaching, other exhibited resistance as originally anticipated.

The class context within the university and the teacher education program also served as a barrier to change. The class had 36 students, plus myself and the professor and frequently a visitor. Whole class discussions became quite unwieldy when the professor did not strongly moderate the discussion. By the time a student was called on, her point was rarely still relevant to where the

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conversation had moved. Introverted students were silenced by the large audience and rarely spoke. Moreover, 25+ of the students were in the same certification cohort. Preservice teachers told me this contributed to their silence on controversial topics; they did not wish to have their peers "jump down their throat" if they offended them by any comments made in class. The university itself as one of them put it "is all about diversity" which paired with the "liberal" readings contributed to a politically correct silencing of opposing views. Thus, students who agreed with the readings would say so and the students who did not agree ideologically were less likely to say anything during the class discussions. Thus the course requirements and expectations did not push them far beyond their comfort zones, especially since students had already gained awareness of many of the topics covered in the course in previous university course work.

Finally, all the students in the cohort spent all day Wednesday in a field placement, many of them in urban (majority minority districts) in the areas surrounding the university. Other students not in the cohort substituted on a regular basis and one was teaching in a Catholic school. Thus, the vast majority of the students were confronted on a regular basis by issues related to the content of the course. During a few whole class discussions this opportunity was taken, however, the fieldwork was formally linked to the other curriculum courses required for the cohort, and not this course. The majority of the teachers the preservice teachers were placed with seemed to be avoiding multiculturalism in their classrooms, thus serving as limited models in this regards.

As far as the actual content of the course I studied, most of the readings presented only the "liberal" side, as the preservice teachers put it or "progressive/radical" perspective as I would put it. Moreover preservice teachers still felt unprepared within the last weeks of class to deal with their future K-12 "kids", parents, school administration in terms of the broad areas covered. The writing assignments forced students to confront a few of the readings directly, however, many students did

not complete readings that were not part of a writing assignment because, as they explained to me, they were not "held responsible" for them by class discussions or writing assignments.

Moreover, the suggestions by advocates of Afrocentrism caused many students to argue against the idea using the "two wrongs don't make a right" argument. This is similar to the findings by King (1991) about preservice teachers concerns about promoting separatism through multiculturalism. Their beliefs about fairness were challenged by the idea of replacing the Eurocentric curriculum with an Afrocentrist one. They seemed to all agree in a class discussion that even a majority African American school should have a balance multicultural curriculum that covered the contributions and experiences of all American subgroups. Because "any group could make the same argument" that their history has been ignored and all students need awareness. They seemed to revert to a kind of universalistic argument anytime group membership was made more salient than individuals.

Preservice teachers are most concerned with survival issues at this point in their coursework. They want to make sure that they can "handle" difficult situations and they expected this course to prepare them for this, as a few participants in one of the focus groups explained:

> *Natasha*—I don't want to look back when we are teachers and think "Well, we were suppose to have the training and the guidance...".
>
> *Carla*—We were suppose to know how to handle things.
>
> *Natasha*—When we get a job the Principal is going to say, "Didn't you take a multicultural class?"
>
> *Lauren*—I think half the class should be discussion and half should be learning from [the professor]. There has to be people that have theories on this. Suggestions on what to do. We don't know any of that.

Implications for Teaching

The preservice teachers' emic explanations for their resistance and apathy in the course under investigation complement the research literature. It is also clear that teacher educators and preservice teachers seem to be at somewhat cross-purposes when engaged in multicultural courses, especially in terms of the goals and anticipated outcomes. I suggest the following to overcome resistance within the context of required multicultural teacher education courses. 1) Clarify and justify the purposes of such a course. 2) Address the controversies associated with changing schooling practices by presenting all sides in the course content. 3) Address teaching dilemmas and methods in order to prepare preservice teachers for actual teaching situations. 4) Give examples, invite guest speakers who can serve as models of multicultural teaching. 5) Maximize placements in local urban schools. 6) Maximize the preservice teachers' diversity within the teacher education program. 7) If possible, smaller courses are recommended to ensure a sense of safety and comfort

1) Clarify and justify the purposes

Be clear on the purpose of a required multicultural course from the beginning, with constant reminders to the preservice teachers during class discussions and through assignments. A goal of promoting open-mindedness and awareness is easily met and dismissed by many students. If they already think they are open-minded, preservice teacher may not see the relevance. The content should move beyond tolerance/awareness to dealing with sticky situations, understanding other perspectives, and issues of underachievement and institutional discrimination. This may increase the possibility of resistance, but is more likely to promote learning. A balance of the goals may lead to the least resistance—these issues are relevant no matter where preservice teachers are coming from. If they are already aware of these issues, they can move along; however, if the course is their first exposure it will be comprehensive and informative.

2) Address the controversies

Present both sides of the issues that are on-going debates or controversies within American society and in the public schools today. Both the traditional and progressive theories and curricula relating to the major topics of instruction should be included in readings. I am particularly convinced by Cochran-Smith's (1995) model of teaching preservice teachers the best current practices, as well as the critiques of these practices. This way preservice teachers will better understand the issue and can honestly choose and present a position in class discussions. Moreover, they will be better prepared to deal with those who disagree with them as future teachers. A few of the more progressive preservice teachers in terms of ideology were still worried about how to deal with parents who don't agree with including multicultural curricula or addressing issues of sexuality in the classroom.

3) Address teaching dilemmas and methods

Even within a social foundations course a discussion of teaching dilemmas and methods can be included. This can be based on the literature, especially ethnographies of good teachers, trade journals that contain lesson plans and even descriptions in the research literature of teaching practices to avoid and to model. Moreover, assignments that ask preservice teachers to apply the theories in their current placements or to their future classrooms illustrates the on-going critical reflection that good teachers practice. Finally, if you choose not to focus your multicultural teacher education course on teaching situations and methods, tell the preservice teachers why in order to confront their concerns directly. They have convinced me that they should be prepared to deal with kids, parents, school administration, as well as gain content knowledge on these issues.

4) Give examples, invite guest speakers

In addition to the suggestions given above, Tatum's (1992; 1994) concept of "White allies" is important. Seeing or even better, meeting teachers who teach a multicultural curricula and who

question schooling practices has a strong impact on preservice teachers. The White female principal of an affiliated Professional Development School gave a meaningful presentation to the students in my study. She explained her commitment to urban schools, discussed some of her on-going dilemmas and current solutions, then asked for their ideas. Preservice teachers seems to expect their teacher educators to give advice. Again, the preservice teachers convinced me that examples and allies are really necessary if they are going to be able to see the relevance of the course and be able to apply it later in their own classrooms as new teachers.

5) Maximize placements in local urban schools

Maximize their placements in local urban schools. My preservice participants were being confronted weekly with situations they didn't know how to address and were eager to discuss. For example, one preservice teacher witnessed ethnic slurs being used between children of color and wondered about intervening. However, the class did not address this topic and he never brought it up in class dicussions, although he told me during an interview that he planned to ask the instructor for advice. Similarly, Zeichner and Melnick (1996) discuss the importance of carefully chosen diverse field experiences in preparing teachers for diversity, especially in light of the need to overcome the lack of lived experiences and resistance of preservice teachers.

6) Maximize the preservice teachers' diversity

The professor noted the value of peer-peer education in an interview and the homogeneity of the class as a structural constraint. One of the preservice teachers commented about not having any African American preservice peers in their elementary cohort although many of them were placed once a week in predominantly African American classrooms in the local schools. Although it is certainly not the responsibility of students of color to educate their European American preservice peers, their contributions to class discussions are often quite helpful. The most meaningful class discussion was started by a Latina student who decided to take some responsibility for educating her

naive peers, as she described them. There is also a body of literature critiquing the selection criteria used for admitting students into teacher education programs (e.g., Stoddard, 1993; Zeichner, 1996). However, within the confines of admitted preservice teachers there are other kinds of lived experiences that seem to make preservice teachers more likely to take multiculturalism seriously. Any experiences with being an outcast, having a minority religion, having diverse friends/dates, or even attending a diverse school all contribute if they are addressed in the classroom.

7) Smaller courses are recommended

In terms of class size, the course under investigation clearly illustrated the problems of a class of 35 for this purpose. The huge physical space between preservice teachers within the circle of desks in the class studied constrained the formation of a learning community. Smaller is definitely better. A smaller number students can be encouraged to participate much easier than 35. Promoting peer interactions with a strong moderator moves beyond the silence that often dominated the course I studied. There is a certain comfort level associated with smaller classes, as well as meaningful discussions. Breaking students down into smaller groups is advised if this is not possible.

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